



# MBTS TEKJOURNAL

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*Latest Service Pack for Windows XP increasing security and fixing problems with previous releases*

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## MBTS Direct

Welcome to the newest MBTS TekJournal. You will notice that we have redesigned it from the ground up for a more professional look and feel. The bar down the left side will now contain hyperlinks to let you jump right to the sections you want to read first, and then have the ability to use your back button on click a link to get back to the top.

The format will no longer be set, and not every TekJournal will necessarily contain all sections as we have tried to do in the past. This hopefully will let up publish quicker as needs arise.

We hope you continue to enjoy the MBTS TekJournal and also hope you will send up your [comments](#).

## Updates

Last month we identified Windows XP Service Pack 2 as Vapourware. It sort of still is, but has also been sort of released. Hopefully by September it will be available as a Windows Update download, but it can also be obtained via CD. For those of you who absolutely can't wait there is a [Network Install Version](#) available but you will want High Speed to download it since it is about 266MB.

MicroByte TekSolutions is just about ready to unveil their new web site and expect to have it up by the end of August. [<<back>>](#)

## How Do I...

If I don't want to wait for the Windows Update version of XP SP2, what do I do and what benefit is there?

First off, follow the link above, or this one, for the [Network Install Version](#) of the service pack and after clicking the download button save the file to be downloaded in a folder on your desktop. To save it to your desktop, click the Save button on the dialog displayed when you click Download. Next click the Desktop icon on the left of the dialog that pops up, and we suggest clicking the folder icon to create a new folder, name it, and open the new folder. Then click the save button and wait for the download to complete. Since the file being downloaded is 266MB you will probably have enough time to get a coke or a coffee because even really high speed broadband will take about 12 – 15 minutes.

The next step is trickier, because everyone's system will be different, but we very strongly suggest you make a backup of you're My Documents folder including your

Favourites from Internet Explorer before proceeding. Once you have done the backup and are certain you have your address book, required email files, your data – pictures- documents, etc. all backed up, close all open programs and disable your Anti Virus software. As another precaution you may also want to disconnect yourself from the Internet. The easiest way is to unplug a cable, but if the cable is not readily accessible open Control Panel, open Network Connections, right click on your Local Area Connection and select disabled.

Now, locate the folder you created on your desktop and open it. Inside you will find a file called “WindowsXP-KB835935-SP2-ENU.exe”. This is a self extracting Cabinet file which contains the upgrade files. Double click on it to begin the installation. The first screen is a Welcome screen where you press the button marked Next to proceed. Follow and accept all prompts – the operation will check for the needed disk space, backup necessary files, and install the updates. At the end of the installation you will be presented with a screen that suggests Restarting your Computer. Accept this screen.

When you system next starts, the first service to start is a new service called Security Centre. This “tool” checks to make sure you have Automatic Updates turned ON and if you don’t recommends that you do so before doing anything else. Windows Firewall is also automatically turned ON when the Service Pack is installed. If you have a hardware firewall (router), this may be redundant.

#### New Options

Security Centre will always start unless you turn this service off. But if you are going to turn it off, why bother installing it in the first place.

When you open Control Panel you should notice new options including *Automatic Updates*, *Network Setup Wizard*, *Security Centre*, *Windows Firewall*, and *Wireless Network Setup Wizard*.

#### **Automatic Updates**

After seeing I, Robot, this option seriously scares me. Microsoft is actually suggesting that you turn on this feature to automatically download and install all updates from Microsoft without ever questioning them. Uh, NO! You may not always understand the language used to describe what the update is, but if you turn this option ON, you no longer own your computer, Microsoft does. I am being a little paranoid, but this is the century of Big Brother. I suggest selecting the option to “Notify me, but don’t automatically download or install them.”

#### **Network Setup**

Running the Network Setup routine on your system if you have more than one computer connected through a hub or router may be a good idea. This utility will reconfigure your network to ensure that Printer and File sharing is still allowed even though Windows Firewall is turned on. In original XP if your Ethernet connection was firewalled, nothing worked.

#### **Security Centre**

Once SP2 is installed you may notice a shield in the system tray for the first few starts, but it eventually goes away. To check it’s contents, open the Control Panel and then open Security Centre. This module is a central location to check on the status of Firewall, Automatic Updates, and Virus Protection. There is also a link to Internet Options, but most if not all of these function are available via the Control

Panel or items in the system tray so this tool is basically redundant and flash.

### **Windows Firewall**

The original Windows Firewall stopped everything. Period.

### **Internet Options**

A new feature in SP2 is a Pop Up Blocker built into Internet Explorer. Once this is turned on (On by default during installation) you can select the security levels – Low allows pop-ups from secure sites, Medium blocks most automatic pop-ups, and High blocks all pop-ups.

Another feature found under the Programs tab in Internet Settings is the ability to Manage Add-ons to Internet Explorer. These could be automatic updaters, extensions from your anti virus software, ActiveX controls, etc. Now you will be able to see what has been added to IE and if there is something you don't want or understand it can be disabled. In the case of ActiveX you can prompt the system to see if there is an update to something previously installed.

### **Outlook Express**

There are enhanced security settings to help you identify and delete potentially harmful email attachments which can contain viruses.

### **Data Execution Prevention**

The released explanation of this is “Data Execution Prevention works with your computer's processor to help prevent viruses and other unauthorized programs from running on your computer.” I guess only time will tell if this feature actually exists.

So, there you have the highlights of the new Windows XP Service Pack 2 in a nutshell. After reviewing my notes, only you can decide if you really want to install this software upgrade. With the above link and instructions, you can do it now, or be like the masses and wait for it to appear on the official website. If you decide to install it, and you decide to wait, the day it appears your computer may be slower than molasses in January in Winnipeg because millions of users will be downloading it too. [<<back>>](#)

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## **Viruses**

On Monday August 9<sup>th</sup> a reworked virus was once again released and this time named [W32.Beagle.AO@mm](#) (other companies called it Bagel). According to Symantec “W32.Beagle.AO@mm is a mass-mailing worm that uses its own SMTP engine to spread. The email attachment is a downloader, similar to the Mitglieder family of Trojans, that downloads the worm from an external source.

The worm also contains backdoor functionality, opening TCP port 80 and UDP port 80.”

It is possible that if your system is infected with this worm it may only be removed by a special tool. Call MicroByte TekSolutions for Virus Removal help and to install new or upgraded versions of Norton Anti Virus 2004. [<<back>>](#)

We hope you have enjoyed this latest MBTS TekJournal and continue to enjoy future issues as well.

